



Ambedkar Times Weekly

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Guru Nanak and his Vision of Egalitarian Social Order



Prem Kumar Chumber

Editor-in-Chief: Ambedkar Times / Desh Doaba

After Tathagath Lord Buddha, it was Baba Guru Nanak Dev Ji who raised a thundering voice against the oppressive social system of caste divisions and untouchability. His engaging approach and consistent efforts for the establishment of egalitarian society both through teachings and practice distinguished him from his predecessors and contemporaries of the Prema-Bhakti path of famous North Indian Bhakti Movement (Great Revolutionary Movement of Satguru Namdev Ji, Satguru Kabir Sahib Ji and Satguru Ravidass Ji Maharaj), which is known for its emphasis on equality of all persons irrespective of their caste, sex and creed before the almighty God. Baba Nanak was for social and gender equality in both the realms of spirituality (Parlok) and terrestrial world (lok). He stood with so-called the lowest of the low. He reiterated that if one was desirous of the grace of God, he had to take care of the lowest of the low. In order to institute the principle of social equality in the sharply divided Hindu caste society, he founded the tradition of common community kitchen (langar) which needs to be financed out of the hard earned living by sharing its fruits. KiratKaro, NaamJapo, Vand Shakko was the trilogy for the success of his social revolution.

However, this trilogy of spiritual path needs to be understood in conjunction with the postulate of the egalitarian social structure of Sikhism meticulously nurtured by Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Sharing the fruits of one's hard earned labor was to be practiced across caste boundaries of the given Hindu society based as it was on the divisive Varna order. Satguru Nanak Dev Ji advocated decimation of all such oppressive caste based social boundaries. The inclusion of the Bani of different spiritual personalities cutting across caste lines vindicates the egalitarian intent of Sikhism. Had Baba Nanak been alive today, he would not have approved of the emergence of Gurdwaras on caste / community lines. Similarly, for the establishment of a true egalitarian society, Guru Nanak Dev Ji laid emphasis for the emancipation and empowerment of the women who were denied equal rights. While highlighting the various merits of women, Guru Nanak Dev Ji said why to condemn them who give birth to princess. He travelled far and wide to comprehend as well as enlighten the ignorants about their duties towards themselves, society and spiritual world. We need to sincerely adopt his teachings in our routine daily life and social dealings to give shape to the society which he envisioned and truly practiced in his earthly life time. Are we genuinely living the way he exhorted us to live? Let us do introspection within ourselves on the auspicious occasion of 553rdGurpurab of Dhan Dhan Satguru Guru Nanak Dev Ji and resolve to follow his teachings in word and spirit.

SHRI GURU RAVIDASS SABHA PITTSBURG CELEBRATES SRI GURU NANAK DEV JI'S 553rd GURPURAB WITH GREAT ENTHUSIASM



All pictures by Prem K. Chumber # Ambedkar Times



Pittsburg: 553rd Birth Anniversary (Gurupurb) of Satguru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj was celebrated at Shri Guru Ravidass Temple, Pittsburg (California) with a spirit of dedication and enthusiasm. Recitation of 3 days Akhand Path Sewa starting from Friday November 11, 2022 to Bhog ceremony on Sunday November 13th, 2022, Akhand Path and Langar Sewa which added to the sanctity of the celebrations, was hosted by the dedicated family of Mr. Varinder Sudhir and his family.

About seven to eight hundred devotees participated in this sublime occasion glorifying the spirituality and dignity of this historic event.

In addition to Guru Ka Langar by the host family, generous food stalls with a variety of different food items performed an admirable service with humility and dedication.

Two renowned and Hazoori Ragi Jathas led by Bhai Balwinder Singh (Guru Ghar Jatha) and Bhai Vijay Pal Singh adorned the function with their melodious Shabad Kirtan based on the life and the

noble contributions towards the promotion of international brotherhood of mankind.

Another local Jatha led by Bhai Santokh Singh Ralh also performed Kirtan Sewa dedicated to the teachings of Gurbani.

On November 12 New Nishan Sahib with a new grandeur and dignity was also installed with a generous donation by devoted family of Bhai Hardial Banga and Bibi Kulwant Kaur (Chairperson).

Mr. Prem Kumar Chumber Editor-in-Chief "Ambedkar Times" and "Desh Doaba" provided live media and pictorial coverage for both the days. Mr Ricky Paul also provided photographic services for both the days.

The Guru Ghar Committee and the host families expressed their gratitude for the volunteer services in the kitchen, maintenance and cleanliness of Guru Ghar.

Host families were also honored by Guru Ghar with Siropas for their generosity and service.

- O. P. Balley

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ANIL BALLEY AND ASHLEY BOUND IN WEDLOCK



Sacramento (Ambedkar Times Bureau) - Anil Balley, the beloved son of Mr. Mahesh Balley and Jacqueline Balley Grandson of Mr. O.P. Balley and late Mrs. Latchmi Balley, Late Mr. Sansar Jagur and late Mrs. Sisso Jagur entered into a sacred bond of Marriage (Anand Karj) with Ashley, beloved daughter of Miss Angeline Naidu, on November 4th, 2022 in Shri Guru Ravidass Temple, Pittsburg (CA) with the recitation of four sacred hymns (Lavan) as composed in Guru Granth Sahib Ji. The wedding ceremony was solemnized in the presence of close relatives and guests from both sides who blessed the newly wedded couple with good wishes for a happy and a prosperous married life.

On November 5th, 2022 a grand reception was held in the evening to honor the wedded couple at MIRAGE BANQUET HALL in Sacramento (CA) which was graced with the attendance of about 300 guests. The entire celebration presented a

very festive look which marked the union of two souls in one light. The couple was greeted with a standing ovation and cheers into the Hall.

The entire Balley family including the patriarch of the family Mr. O.P. Balley, his sons Vinod Balley, Rakesh Balley and daughter Rina alongwith their families stood as a team to make this family function a success.

Mr. O.P. Balley the proud grandfather of Anil Balley welcomed Ashley Balley as a part of the Balley family. He also thanked all the honorable guests and the entire Jagur family who graced the occasion with their presence and added to the beauty and grandeur of the celebrations. He also expressed his good wishes for a long, happy and a prosperous married life for the couple who just joined the institution of marriage from which everyone keeps learning for entire life. Mr. Anil was also admired for serving the nation as

a soldier in the Military which should now inspire him to be another soldier in his married life.

Mr. Mahesh and Jacqueline were also admired by Mr. O.P. Balley for their parental role in raising Anil with good values of life.

Mr. Mahesh Balley and Jacqueline Balley also thanked the guests and congratulated the couple for starting a new journey of their life.

Miss Angeline Naidu, the proud mother of Ashley also congratulated the couple with good wishes emotionally for their happy married life. Her relatives from Australia also graced the occasion with their presence.

Mr. Disha and Neelam from Las Vegas, Mr. Sunil and Dineesha with their little daughter Jassica from U.K and Konika from Atlanta who, being close relatives of the Balley family, also attended all the functions attached to the ceremony and added to the glamour of the entire function.

Angela, the older sister of Anil assisted by her friend did a good job in conducting the proceedings of the function from the podium. Monika Balley daughter of Vinod Balley also played a prominent role in organizing the floor with various patterns of dances for the celebration.

It was a wonderful evening enjoyed by all with lots of fun, various types of dances and delicious food and beverages.

Besides video coverage by professional photographers, the "Ambedkar Times" and "Desh Doaba" (Weeklies) send its hearty congratulations on this auspicious occasion. Some significant pictures of the function have also been appended to this report.

This special evening which continued till mid-night will go in the annals of the history of both the families as an unforgettable event.

Again best wishes for the newly wedded.

All pictures by
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Police DAV Public School – PDAV – Model-UN (PDAVMUN)

On November 11, I have had the honour to visit Police DAV Public School at Jalandhar, A Temple of Excellence – one of the best schools in the Doaba region of Punjab. It was one of my earnest wishes, ever since I came back to my roots in Jalandhar after a long diplomatic career, which was realized and would remain with me as a cherished memory in the coming years. As Mirza Ghalib said 'Rang layegi Hamari Fakamasti Ek Din', Principal of the School, Dr. Rashmi Vij, educational and cultural excellence personified, thoughtfully invited me to be the Chief Guest and Key Note Speaker at one of important events of the School – PDAVMUN which I, obviously, accepted with pleasure. I had met Dr. Rashmi Vij and her worthy husband Sunil Vij, a highly placed professional Executive in private sector at a couple of social occasions

The personal touch in hospitality and demeanour of Principal Rashmi Vij was very impressive to register her persona as I had heard about her humane personality otherwise too. One may consider these minor details superfluous but I have no hesitation in saying that Rashmi Vij is not only an acclaimed academic and educational administrator but also a human being par excellence. These qualities of head and heart have made Police DAV Public School one of the premier educational institutions. In her assertions in the Suragini – Changing Societal Perspective To wards



tioning about the 'Soft and Cultural Diplomacy' of India, I informed the young delegates that yet another proposal to declare April 14, birthday of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, as International Day of Equality under the aegis of UN was resting with the Government of India and UN Secretariat and solicited all out support to the proposal as it would amount to one more feather in the turban of India in addition to Mahatma Gandhi's birthday, 2nd October, as International Day of Non-violence and International Yoga Day. Mentioning the appreciable activity of the School in arranging PDAVMUN, I said that UN thoughtfully introduced the programme of M-UN in the year 2000 for 'educational simulation in which students can learn about diplomacy, international relations and the UN'. I added that UN offered many opportunities to

good and d u l y d e m o n - strated the appreciable efforts of both the t r a i n e r s and the participating delegates. The young students of the School, Aryan Kalia and Mohini Khanna acted and performed as the Secretary General and the Director General respectively with confidence. I found both them well groomed and enthusiastic. I am confident the well groomed and educated young talent of the School will bring further laurels to their Alma matter like Hockey Olympian Hardik Singh and Little Master Vinay among



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and briefly interacted with them. As a highly alert and competent educational administrator, Rashmi Vij remembered me and my professional background and provided me an opportunity to further educate myself. Thanks a lot Madam Principal Rashmi Vij. Let us talk about PDAVMUN. Keeping with its standing, Police DAV Public School regularly hosts this UN motivated and promoted event. This year was the 4th Chapter in which more than 400 delegates from about 25 schools in the northern region of India participated in a 3 day conference; the opening plenary session of which was a befitting kick start of PDAVMUN. The function fully justified which I read in an elegant publication of the School; the Suragini – 25th Anniversary Edition, a copy of which was kindly gifted to me by Principal Rashmi Vij. British Council in its commendatory recognition rightly described the School as an institution with "an outstanding development of international learning in the curriculum". The School has established its contacts and exchanges with many countries like Sweden UK, South Korea, inter alia. On alighting from the car, I could feel the pleasant ambience of the well maintained clean campus and premises of the School. I was received by the Coordinators of PDAVMUN, Balwinder Singh, Manoj Dutta and Seema Sharma, very courteous and well trained teachers, and ushered me to the elegantly and meaningfully furnished office of Principal Rashmi Vij for a courtesy meeting over tea and refreshments along with other two educational administrators in the DAV fraternity; Principal Anita Nanda of Lala Jagat Narain DAV Memorial School and Principal S.K. Gautam of Dayanad Model School.

School Education: Time To Clean The Lens, she has aptly quoted John Adams, "The purpose of Education is two- fold, one is to teach how to make a living and the other how to live." Indian education system, to my mind, still needs to go a long way in this regard.

PDAVMUN plenary began with the traditional DAViet drill of Sarswati Vandhana, Lighting of the Lamp followed by the substantive part of the function. Principal Rashmi Vij in her welcome remarks informed that PDAVMUN remained an important event in the calendar of the School which tended to educate and prepare the young delegates for their much needed international exposure. She was confident that the 4th Chapter has thoughtfully introduced new aspects like the Punjab Legislative Assembly, Terrorism, and Kashmir issue among others for the benefit of young students. In my key note address without going into the history of the UN I said that India being one of the founding member of UNO, even before her independence, has been an active and vocal member of the world body and rightly so. Referring to the sterling contribution of Hansa Mehta, a Gandhian, to the Declaration of Human Rights and Vijay Lakshmi Pandit as President of the UNGA in 1953 and more recently Shashi Tharoor as Assistant Secretary General said that India was fully involved and integrated with the UN System to execute and carry forward the UN Agenda of – international peace, socio-economic development, equitable world order through the mechanism of UN Millennium Goals and SDGs in keeping with the cardinal dictum of India's foreign policy inspired by 'Vashudaiv Kutumbkum'. Men-

work under the System like; UN Career, UN Volunteers, UN Academic Impact to foster the engagement of universities and colleges as stake holders and urged young students to look at these career choices in due course. Commenting on the efficacy and functioning of the UN, I said that with the changed and fast evolving international scenario, UN has lost its steam and required urgent and immediate restructuring and expansion to address the challenges of the future. India being a large country and the largest democracy of the world and also one of fastest growing economies must get due role and space including a permanent seat on the 'Horse Shoe' high table at the UN in New York. India fully fits the bill. I also added as a matter of satisfaction that India had arrived with 'pragmatic and assertive' foreign policy not only to fully safeguard our national interests but also be a dignified member of the comity of nations for mutually beneficial and accommodative world order under the leadership of PM Narendra Modi and EAM S, Jaishankar. My concluding shot to caution the delegates was that since, in diplomatic parlance, foreign policy of any country was an extension of its internal strength, we the people of India must insure that India remained on rails for our internal strength and progress as a multi-racial, multi-cultural and inclusive polity and society. The programme was inter-spread by cultural inputs like fusion music, dance and songs by the School Talent. Little Master, Vinay of 2nd Standard and Sa-Re-Gama fame, stole the show by leading the group song welcoming the Guests. The mock exercise of one of UN Committees staged by the delegates to PDAVMUN was

others. The function concluded with the Vote of Thanks by the PDAVMUN Coordinator Balwinder Singh and SG Aryan Kalia. This narration will not be complete, if I don't mention appreciably the good job done by Preeti Khehra and Jaspreet Boparai as Master of Ceremonies. Having just commemorating its 25th Anniversary, Police DAV Public School has come a long way in establishing itself as one of the leading 'Centers of Excellence' in school education in the area under the stewardship of its founding Principal Rashmi Vij and the dream project of a 'Man of Vision', M.S. Bhullar, IPS, Founding Chairman of the school management. It is a matter of gratification to know that Bhullar Sahib is still actively involved in over-seeing the progress of the School. I have had an opportunity to bump into him some months ago at the retirement Reception of one of my friends S.K. Kalia, IPS at the Punjab Golf Club in the neighborhood of Police DAV Public School campus.

I found him alert and full of life and still kicking. Along with the academics and educational administrators like Dr. Rashmi Vij and her team, the top brass of Punjab Police from M.S. Bhullar to I.P.S. Sahota, who also is a good friend of mine, remained at the helm and contributed immensely to development and progress of Police DAV Public School at Jalandhar during their respective tenures as the Boss of Jalandhar PAP. Yet another dynamic IPS officer, M.F. Farooqui has joined the big league as Chairman of the school management recently.

I take this opportunity to wish him and Principal Rashmi Vij all the best for further success of the School in the years to come.

Election Results that Impact Sacramento County

Since the election on November 8th, I have seen a tremendous amount of analysis from people about how it will impact things on a national level with regards to the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate. But on the state and local level, there were some issues that were voted on that will have major importance to us on the local level that I have seen very little coverage on - even by local papers. For my monthly article, I want to highlight the three most impactful ones so that you can know what to expect. And even though the votes are still being counted, each of these three I am going to describe below have enough votes counted for us to know with high confidence how they are going to wind up.

First is Measure A, which was a local vote for all residents of Sacramento

County that would have raised the sales take by a ½ cent per \$1.00 spent, raising around \$212,500,000 annually until 2063 to spend on various transportation purposes like roads, public transit, vehicle emission reduction. Normally when local taxes are voted on, if the measure discloses exactly where the money will be spent (which was the case here) it needs to get 66% or more votes in favor in order to pass. But a quirk in the law allowed this one to only need to get above 50% in order to pass, which made it seem like a foregone conclusion that it would easily get enough votes in order to pass. But in a huge surprise, even though the "yes" campaign spent well over \$2,000,000 the measure appears to have failed - which will likely put a stop in the near future to more local transportation taxes showing up on the ballot.

Second is Measure B, which was a local vote in Sacramento County to allow the County to tax cannabis. This appears to have failed to reach the 66% needed, which means we will not be having cannabis stores popping up in the unincorporated parts of the County. This will likely not be the end of the efforts to pass this, and I would expect future tax proposals like this to appear on the ballot - but at least for now the status quo will remain.

Lastly is Proposition 31, which was a statewide vote that would ban the sale of most flavored tobacco products across California. This passed overwhelmingly, which means these products will soon be banned. Sacramento County earlier this year put a ban in place in the unincorporated county, but these products could still be bought in neighboring cities like Citrus Heights, Folsom, and

Roseville. With the ban in place, these cities will not be allowed to sell these products anymore.



Sue Frost

Thank you for reading - and as always, if you want to contact me, call me at 916-874-5491, or e-mail me at SupervisorFrost@sacounty.net.

Sacramento County Supervisor Sue Frost represents the 4th District, which includes the communities of Citrus Heights, Folsom, Orangevale, Antelope, North Highlands, Rio Linda, Elverta, and Rancho Murieta.

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